



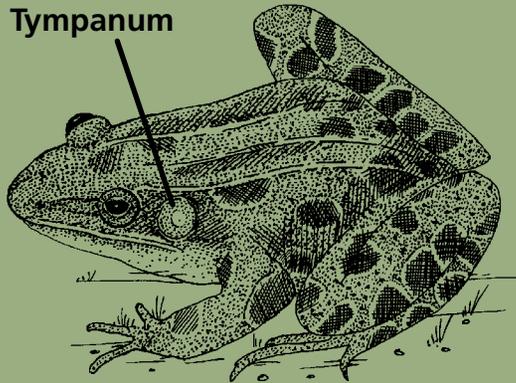
Amphibians of the Swamp...

Amphibians are animals that live a portion of their life in water. Some, like sirens, live their entire life in water. While the word “moist” may carry a negative connotation to some humans, most frogs and toads rely on keeping their skin moist to survive.

Drums in the Night

Start a walk in the swamp at dusk and imagine listening to a symphony orchestra commence a soft prelude with the timpani drums beating with every step. As the sunlight dims, the music crescendos transitioning into the swamp’s own symphony of croaking. Seemingly on cue, males searching for a mate call out for females, veiled from predators in the darkness. Females hear the male serenades with their tympanum, the frog or toad’s outer ear located behind the eye. Amphibians use this tympanum, an ancient word in Greek meaning drum, because it resembles a piece of cloth stretched over a drum.

Tympanum



The tympanum of this Southern leopard frog is identified here. The Southern leopard frog can be distinguished because it has a yellow spot in the center of its tympanum.

Watching wildlife the responsible way...

The thrill of watching a wild animal in its native surroundings is spectacular and awe inspiring. While visiting Big Cypress National Preserve, or any other natural area, remember:

- All wildlife is wild and unpredictable. Stay a safe distance from any wild animal —15 feet is recommended.
- View wildlife with respect.
- Never feed wildlife.
- All plants and animals within national park areas are protected, it is illegal to collect any wildlife without special permits.

Cover photo: oak toad, courtesy of Jan Shirey, NPS/VIP

**How You Behave
Can Save
Do Not Feed or
Harass Wildlife**



EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA!

Big Cypress Amphibians



SALAMANDERS

Sirens

- ___ Everglades dwarf siren
- ___ Greater siren

Pseudobranchius axanthus belli
Siren lacertina

Newts

- ___ Peninsula newt

Notophthalmus viridescens piaropicola

Amphiumas

- ___ Two-toed amphiuma

Amphiuma means

FROGS AND TOADS

True frogs

- ___ Pig frog
- ___ Southern leopard frog

Rana grylio
Rana sphenoccephala

Toads

- ___ Giant, marine, or cane toad*
- ___ Oak toad
- ___ Southern toad

Bufo marinus
Bufo quercicus
Bufo terrestris

Treefrogs

- ___ Florida cricket frog
- ___ Green treefrog
- ___ Barking treefrog
- ___ Squirrel treefrog
- ___ Little grass frog
- ___ Eastern narrow-mouthed toad
- ___ Cuban treefrog*
- ___ Florida chorus frog

Acris gryllus dorsalis
Hyla cinerea
Hyla gratiosa
Hyla squirella
Pseudacris ocularis
Gastrophyrne carolinensis
Osteopilus septentrionalis
Pseudacris nigrita verrucosa

Frogs

- ___ Greenhouse frog

Eleutherodactylus planirostris

* = invasive species



Above: Barking treefrog; Above Right: Eastern Narrow-mouthed toad; Right: A Southern leopard frog, one of the larger frogs of the swamp – only the pig frog is larger. Photos courtesy of Todd Pierson.



Amphibians tend to be highly sensitive to environmental changes, for that reason scientists often use them to determine the overall health of an area.



Left: Cuban treefrog, an introduced species that has spread rapidly in Florida. These frogs disrupt the ecosystem because they eat smaller native tree frogs. The native Green treefrog (right) can change to brown coloring, thereby confusing identification. However, the Cuban treefrog has extra large toe pads and much wartier skin than natives. It also has a skin fold starting from the eye towards the tympanum.

All photos: Courtesy of Jan Shirey, NPS/VIP, unless otherwise noted.